

## Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EUR-12 SES-02 AGRE-00  
COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 EA-10 /134 W  
-----066546 091449Z /46

R 090952Z SEP 78  
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8415  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SREF, SU, ET  
SUBJECT: ERITREAN REFUGEES IN SUDAN

SUMMARY: ERITREAN REFUGEE SITUATION AS A MAJOR HUMAN PROBLEM  
APPEARS TO BE WORSENING AND ABILITY SUDANGOV TO ACCOMMODATE  
REFUGEES APPEARS TO BE SLIPPING. AS NEW REFUGEES ARRIVE  
THERE IS PRESSURE TO COME TO KHARTOUM AND OTHER URBAN CENTERS  
RATHER THAN REMAIN IN RURAL AREAS WHERE THEY ARE "INVISIBLE."  
IRONICALLY, IT IS IN CITIES WHERE POTENTIAL FOR SOCIAL  
FRICTION IS GREATEST AND SUDANGOV LEAST ABLE ABSORB REFUGEES.  
SUDANGOV TAKING STEPS KEEP REFUGEES AWAY FROM CAPITAL, BUT  
ERITREAN PRESENCE HERE MORE NOTICEABLE THAN ANY TIME IN  
RECENT PAST. PROBLEM LIKELY TO WORSEN IN NEAR TERM AND AT  
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ONE POINT WE WOULD EXPECT IT TO ATTRACT MORE PUBLIC ATTENTION  
IN U.S. THAN HAS BEEN SO UNTIL NOW, CONSIDERING WHAT A  
LARGE PROBLEM IT REALLY IS. END SUMMARY

1. RECENT NEWS ITEMS IN LOCAL PRESS REGARDING ERITREAN  
REFUGEES, MAJOR STORY BY AMERICAN JOURNALIST IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE MONTHLY PUBLISHED BY MININFO AND SIMPLY GROWING

PRESENCE OF ERITREANS IN KHARTOUM AREA HAVE DRAWN OUR ATTENTION TO WHAT WE FEEL CERTAIN IS WORSENING REFUGEE SITUATION IN SUDAN. IN ADDITION, EMBOFF RECENTLY VISITED KASSALA WHERE HIS OBSERVATIONS TEND CONFIRM POINTS MADE IN SEPTEMBER SUDANOW ARTICLE.

2. FEW DAYS AGO LOCAL DAILY SAHAFI REPORTED THAT KHARTOUM PROVINCE AUTHORITIES ASKED EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES IN OTHER PROVINCES NOT RPT NOT TO ALLOW ANY OF THOSE REFUGEES WHO WERE SENT AWAY DURING OAU CONFERENCE TO RETURN TO KHARTOUM WITHOUT OFFICIAL PERMISSION OR DOCUMENT SHOWING REFUGEE RETURNING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE. SUDANOW REPORTS THAT NEW REGULATIONS ARE BEING PROMULGATED THAT MAY FORCE THOUSANDS OF URBAN REFUGEES OUT OF TOWNS INTO RURAL AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS. SOME THOUSANDS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE BEING SENT TO KHASHM EL-GIRBA, 90 KM SOUTH OF KASSALA.

3. AS MAGAZINE POINTS OUT, MOST REFUGEES WISH TO RETURN TO ERITREA IF POSSIBLE BUT AUTHOR DON CONNELL NOTES THAT MANY REFUGEES ARE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD RETURNED HOME ONLY TO COME BACK TO SUDAN FOR SECOND TIME. MANY ARE URBAN REFUGEES WHO HOPE TO GET TO MIDDLE EAST, EUROPE OR AMERICA, BUT OFTEN THEY ARE DISAPPOINTED. NOT SURPRISINGLY, MENTAL STATE OF ERITREAN REFUGEES, WHO AT TIMES ARE ALSO DISCOURAGED WITH ERITREAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND DEPRESSED OVER TURN OF EVENTS ON THEIR HOMELAND, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS LOW INDEED.

4. IN HIS REPORT CONNELL DESCRIBES, IN ADDITION TO PROFOUND DISORIENTATION AND LISTLESSNESS, CONDITIONS THAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS GRIM. HE NOTES OVERCROWDED FACILITIES FOR ANIMALS AND HUMANS, POOR VENTILATION, AND DISEASE. UNDER WHAT ONE DOCTOR DESCRIBES AS WAR CONDITIONS, PRINCIPAL HEALTH PROBLEMS ARE TUBERCULOSIS, MALARIA, GASTRO-ENTERITIS AND MEASLES AMONG CHILDREN. HOSPITALS ARE CROWDED AND RESOURCES ARE STRAINED.

5. SUDANGOV REMAINS OFFICIALLY HOSPITABLE, BUT CLEARLY IT CANNOT COPE EFFECTIVELY WITH REFUGEE PRESENCE PERHAPS NOW TOTALLING 150,000 OR MORE. IN NARROW TERMS, RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES AT AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS MAKES MOST SENCE BECAUSE THERE IS SHORTAGE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOR AND REFUGEES CAN MAKE CONTRIBUTION BY WORKING AT THESE SITES. MOREOVER, SOCIAL FRICTIONS LIKELY TO ARISE IN CITIES, ARE LESS SEVERE AT RURAL LOCATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, URBAN REFUGEES ARE NOT RPT NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN REMAINING IN COUNTRYSIDE, AND DESPITE STEPS TAKEN TO KEEP THEM AWAY FROM CAPITAL AREA THEY CONTINUE TO ARRIVE. WE NOTE GROWING ANTAGONISM BETWEEN

SUDANESE MAN-IN-STREET AND ERITREANS. THEY ARE NOTICEABLY DIFFERENT, ESPECIALLY WOMEN. ERITREAN WOMEN, WHO AS A GROUP ARE REMARKABLY ATTRACTIVE, DO NOT SEEM TO SHARE DEEP CONSERVATISM OF THEIR SUDANESE SISTERS. TO SUDANESE THEY LACK MODESTY.

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6. EMBOFF WHO RECENTLY VISITED KASSALA CONFIRMS THAT REFUGEES AS GROUP ARE DISORIENTED AND FEEL MISERABLE. THEY NOT RPT NOT HAPPY IN SUDAN, BUT SITUATION IN ERITREA EVEN WORSE, A POINT CONNEL ALSO NOTES IN POINTING OUT THAT WITHIN ERITREA THERE IS VERY SERIOUS DISPLACED PERSONS PROBLEM WITH LITTLE BEING DONE TO ALLEVIATE HARDSHIPS OF THIS GROUP.

7. COMMENT: DESPITE THEIR NUMBERS AND TOTAL HUMAN SUFFERING THEY EXPERIENCING, ERITREAN REFUGEES SEEM TO ATTRACT MUCH LESS ATTENTION IN U.S. THAN THOSE IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA OR SOUTHEAST ASIA. PERHAPS THAT IS BECAUSE SUDANGOV, IN CONTRAST TO SOME ASIAN/PACIFIC COUNTRIES HAS MADE VALIANT

EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE REFUGEES. THREE THINGS ARE ALTERING  
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SITUATION THAT HAS EXISTED UNTIL NOW, HOWEVER. FIRST AND  
MOST SIMPLY, NUMBERS ARE GETTING SO LARGE IT MORE THAN  
SUDANGOV CAN HANDLE. SECONDLY, SUDAN HAS EXPERIENCED  
SERIES OF VERY DIFFICULT MAN-MADE AND NATURAL CALAMITIES  
RECENTLY, SO THAT LIFE FOR SUDANESE THEMSELVES IS HARD ENOUGH  
FOR GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO COPE WITH; BURDEN OF REFUGEES ALSO UNDER  
THESE CIRCUMSTANCES EVEN MORE ONEROUS. (THIS ALSO HAS  
ADDED TO RESENTMENT OF SUDANESE WHO OFTEN BLAME REFUGEES FOR  
LACK OF SUGAR FOR EXAMPLE.) FUNALLY, AS NOTED BY CONNELL,  
THERE IS A NEW BREED OF REFUGEE ARRIVING NOW WHO WANTS TO  
GET TO KHARTOUM OR, EVEN BETTER, JIDDA OR KUWAIT. HE IS  
LESS LIKELY PASSIVELY TO ACCEPT WHATEVER ASSISTANCE AND  
COMFORT (SIC) SUDAN CAN OFFER AND BE SATISFIED BY IT. AS  
NEW GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS INDICATE, THIS IS MATTER OF  
GROWING CONCERN TO SUDANGOV AND IT RESTS ON SOCIAL AND  
ECONOMIC AS WELL AS SECURITY FACTORS.

8. WE DO NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY EXPECT AN EXPLOSION.  
HOWEVER, THERE IS AN ENORMOUS HUMAN PROBLEM THAT IS GROWING  
STEADILY WORSE. SEEMS INEVITABLE THAT AT ONE STAGE U.S.  
PUBLIC WILL BECOME AWARE OF ERITREAN REFUGEE PROBLEM IN  
SUDAN. DESPITE OUR PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION OF THIS SUBJECT,  
WE THINK TIME MAY BE NEAR WHEN IT SHOULD BE LOOKED AT AGAIN,  
ESPECIALLY IN CONTEXT OVERALL DEVELOPMENTS IN ERITREA.  
BOGOSIAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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